

I am Nic Marcy, drum-set educator in Round Rock, TX an Austin TX suburb. I've been teaching approximately 14 years a good number of my students are between 20 - 30 years old and perform weekends.

I've been playing drum-set over fifty years. I began playing at four years old, learning from my uncle Joe who kept his drums at our house in Queens, New York. At seven, learned more from Frank Gigante a big band drummer and took more formal lessons at age eleven with Tony Monforte in Binghamton, New York. Tony was a great educator that taught me to read drum-set notation and appreciate Jazz music. I studied with Charlie Persip for a bit , later I went to Berklee College of Music and studied with Alan Dawson. I Played in a Jazz trio at eleven, went on the road my first time at fourteen, traveled with numerous bands more than I have time to mention, ran a recording studio in the mid seventies and continued to do session work into the eighties.

I have written two drum-set books dealing with mobility. I've focused on interdependence and the drum-set as a musical instrument. I see interdependence as a "hitch in the git-along" when creating musical rhythm that interprets music accurately on drum-set.

Recently I've dabbled in creating drum-set notation software, a sample version can be downloaded free at:

[www.drumsetwriter.com](http://www.drumsetwriter.com)

I don't see the drum-set as much of a musical instrument as say... Terry Bozzio where each instrument is tuned to a specific note or Ari Hoenig a drum-set musician that uses a pressure technique on the heads bending specific notes out of the drums.

I'm going for more of a countermelody that has it's limitations by the amount of notes available in your kit set - up. I might start with a swamp groove between the kick and snare and possibly extend, morph, add rhythm and melody in the toms as my ears dictate.

My books don't really go where I go when I play..... they give me the facility to play what I hear in the moment. I think this facility is a key ingredient to being an equal participant in Jazz or a Jam band situation. Being fluid and liquid in orchestration on the drum-set is vital to change or contour your environment while keeping the shape intact.

I think limitations by players style consciousness have impacted the creativity curve and more often than I would like, the music they play just isn't doing anything new. I hear young artist's make statements like, " everything has been done ". I think that's because they're not looking hard enough. I think there is a vast universe of ideas that haven't been used, tried or thought about. I think teaching music has become to much of a science, we're getting to far away from explaining music as an art form.

The books I've written manipulate ideas by math and demonstrate ways to embellish, orchestrate and ornament what came to your mind the first time you played along with some new music. I think what comes out is essentially something I refer to as a "rac-beat". This is the rhythm that most players know and fall into along with some bass part they recognize. This rac-beat has merit as a great starting point, the problem is this is to often as far as the drum-set musician is inclined to take it. What I'm hoping is that the practice material will stimulate growth processes that may encourage notating the rac-beat idea and manipulating it by some simple systems that may ultimately make a better fit. Encourage a look at the melody, combine elements that weren't just a groove you've learned but an interpretation of the song. If this happens maybe someday the drum-part will be recognized as a musical entity and we can get the writing credits we deserve. ....

So in the long and short of the books I think the scope will exceed your first look at the material. First look thoughts... are that I know some of this and I hope you do..but the review doesn't last very long it's just a starting point to "back check" what you think you know.

The exercises range from very simple to very complex ideas .. I have a page in my book *Exotic Interdependence*, called "rocking rides" .. it brakes up the basic pop groove in ways that many drummers never try. Some of it might be to much for some music but things like short and long eighth notes can enhance a groove to fit more rhythmically and musically.

My favorite non-drum-set musician of all time was Miles Davis he could play ballads beautifully and didn't because he could.... he chose the "pain of gain" he stayed on the cutting edge and felt sorry for those that didn't explore.

I hear lots of creativity in the country music today and even though the old players bitch about the young ones getting away from the style. The cash cow of our industry is now the country music business. It might just be the most creative and productive part of the music industry today. I think the bottom line is country music is taking a few risks and bringing more people to that style of music because it's interesting.

Recently heavy weight drum-set musicians like Vinnie Colaiuta and Keith Carlock have stepped into the pop-country genre. A couple of Thanks giving's ago my wife and I watched a Faith Hill special on TV... The Drum-set musician was Vinnie Colaiuta. The music style ..... Pop-country . How creative can he be.....(I had to ask myself) ? It was an amazing lesson Vinnie never for an instant played anything mundane or any "rac-beat". He consistently drove forth with creative musical drumming statements that never sounded repetitive or cliché.

This epitomizes my focus and mission for teaching, finding a groove that works beautifully with some song that's just a song...

Not a complex show of chops but a complimentary groove that is connected to the form of the tune. This creative environment is the ingredient that moves a listener's soul ..

Please visit: [www.nicksdrumstudio.com](http://www.nicksdrumstudio.com)

"runs in two" is an exercise from my Book *Exotic Interdependence* .....